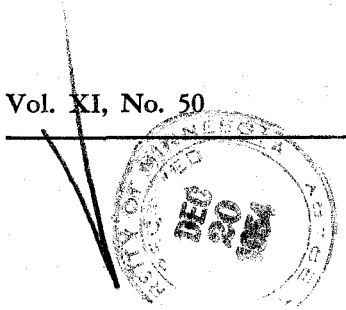
Vol. XI, No. 50 HUMAN EVENTS December 15, 1954



STAR OF WONDER

By E. MERRILL ROOT

TO A WORLD that has ceased to live by poetry and is dying of prose, Christmas must seem as poignantly strange as a knife in the startled heart, yet as good as sudden bread to the starving mouth.

For Christmas is a poem — and therefore real. Reality has nothing to do with the intellect's abstractions, whether stupid or brilliant: its root is the Latin *res*, which means not an "idea" (even a platonic idea), but a thing, a thing like a tank that grinds the shuddering granite, a thing like a tulip splendid out of the April loam. The catchword of the hour is "ideology", that verbal mist between the mind and reality, that brain-stirred smog between the senses and the thing. But plain men and poets, who move in the solid and tangible world of reality, know better: to them flame is hot and water is wet, and a paving-stone is hard under the heel.

Res, the thing, has substance; and substance means (as here in the Christmas story) this new-born child, yonder slow patient ox staring from brown liquid eyes, that silly lamb in its "woolly clothing of delight," this stubble of straw that pricks the hand and gleams to the eye, the star, fiery in the velvet night, the sword bloody in the hands of Herod. Thus Christmas is not the vague and tedious nonsense called an "ideology": it is a poem, burning with a "hard gem-like flame." Christmas is a poem, and therefore real like granite or the sun.

And Christmas is a poem which — like all great poems from Homer's *Iliad* to G. K. Chesterton's "Ballad of the White Horse" — deals with first and last things, with the simple and the stark, with the primal and the elemental. Its burden is the travail of women in childbirth, the proximity of the animals who are our elder brothers, the distance yet the parallel destiny of the stars, the weight of Caesar's tax and the edge of Herod's sword.

It is, therefore, *conservative,* as all great poems must be: for it deals with realities that abide and endure, unchanged, unchanging, unchangeable: it acclaims not the gas lamps or the Mazdas of the fickle centuries, but the sea-lifting moon and the day-giving sun of the inexorable aeons. It deals not with the world's fashionable novelties of nonsense — with the aberrations and perversities that so easily beset us; with the "women who come and go talking of Michael Angelo" — but with love and hate, with birth and death, as they play their basic drama under the fundamental stars.

CHRISTMAS IS THE POEM of the Master of Reality, the Great Conservator, who came to conserve the fallen world that He had created good; to restore at least — not by fiat of Caesar, but by His own individual life and death — the blissful seat of Eden which was His primal act and will. And, in so coming, He came as all men must, in the old un-

Copyright 1954 by HUMAN EVENTS, INC.
Published weekly at 1835 K Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

changing way, cherished for nine months close under Mary's heart; He did not, like Molière's doctor, say, "But we have changed all that."

He came, inexorably, and by conservative choice, to the place where simple, genuine men worked patiently for their daily bread in the sweat of their brows, and where the good animals moved in the placid and magical rhythm of their nature-nurtured lives. As Thomas Hardy told us only yesterday, these things (the plow, the old horse, the burning leaves, the lovers whispering in the lane) will still *be* after the parade of empires is one with yesterday's seven thousand years. For these things are basic to the conservative earth herself.

In harmony with this fundamental conservatism, God came in swaddling clothes and not the purple of empire; He was carried not in the radical chariot but on the conservative ass; His throne was not the ivory shaded by the peacock fans of fashion, but the humble straw of the farm that transcends time. His birth, void of all the pomp and circumstances of men's inventions, had the grandeur of elemental things — of the night, the stars, the ancient earth, the anguish and joy of the mother, the hovering shadow of His private death (for Golgotha, to Him, was already His). Before the majesty of such simplicity, the Wise Men rightly became as the little children of wisdom; the simple shepherds became justly the monumental Kings of the Star. Far from book or bell, from scepter or sword, from forum or marketplace, God came into the world that He had made, in a setting as starkly elemental as the granite ribs of the earth.

That is exactly the way Shakespeare — greatest of conservative poets, and supreme poet of the world — saw reality. I must believe that Shakespeare had Christmas in mind when he showed the once haughty and illusioned Lear, wakened at last by the bitter tonic of reality, seeking now to be born (and born better) in the hut or hovel where he "bides the pelting of (that) pitiless storm." There, reduced from the lie of power to the truth of pain, Lear speaks the very heart of all true conservatism:

> "Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! Here's three on's are sophisticated! Thou art the thing itself; unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off you lendings!"

Seeing, beneath all Man's "lendings," the basic Eternity in Man's heart, Lear reaches reality at last. He attains the conservative vision of the basic *I Am,* of the changeless Eternal Now of God. And just so, *from the first* — without Lear's pride or illusion — God, in the manger of Bethlehem, came as "unaccommodated men" bare of all time's "lendings."

SUCH IS THE TONIC REALISM that takes the conservative to the roots of the world. The conservative reveres the greatest verse in *Ecclesiates:* "God hath set Eternity in Man's heart, but men have sought out many inventions." Thus no one can understand conservatism who supposes that a "conservative" is just a man on the side of riches, power, sophistication: rather, the conservative is the realist, taking ever the side of all that is real, abiding, basic, fundamental — taking the side of the stars and the seas; of the forests of redwood that have gathered strength and wisdom through the centuries; of the multiplication table that even John Dewey cannot change; of the inexorable spectrum of color

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and the inevitable octaves of the musical scale that were, before the beginning of time, exactly what they will be after the end of time; of the Taj Mahal and the Parthenon and the cathedral of Chartres; of Aeschylus and Dante and Bach and Rembrandt; of the elemental human spirit in its grief and in its glory. The conservative is a man who distrusts the flicker of time because he trusts the Eternity that ever invades time to make it live.

And the world's death — in the first Christmas and today — lies in the fickle temporality that shuns the Eternity which alone is the life of time. It was Lucifer in the world's dawn, it is Lucifer in the world's noon, who brings death and all our woe, with loss of Eden. And the Great Adversary, in the world's dawn as in the world's noon, sits in the seats of the mighty, the proud, the sophisticated: he wears the tuxedo and he drives the Cadillac, he parades the cap and gown and receives the honorary degrees. God is born in the manger but Lucifer is born in the palace of Caesar or the penthouse of Manhattan. Lucifer moves, brilliant and acclaimed by the *New Yorker,* an acrobat of sophistication, through the three-ring circus of smartness and light. God finds no room at the inn, but Lucifer is endowed by all the great foundations.

Yet Lucifer uses the light only to destroy the Light. He thinks it witty to say that two plus two equalled one yesterday and will equal thirteen tomorrow; he reckons himself a stout fellow because he bawls that grass is purple; he believes himself brave because he hates the man on Main Street, U.S.A., and "loves" the ideological man in the moon who belongs to the U.N. Lucifer, immediately bored by the inexhaustible poetry of this unfathomable universe, makes Nature jump through a hoop of tricks with Gertrude Stein or Picasso . . . while — forgotten, ignored, unseen — the tiger burns bright from the anvil of God, and the beaded bubbles wink at the world's brim, and the magic casements open on the foam.

Lucifer, as Goethe knew and said, is the nihilist of a perpetual *No*; God is the creator of an internal *Yes*. And when God came to conserve His world by the re-creation called Christmas, He affirmed his revelation that only the old things can ever be the new things. He made all things new as only the conservator can — for He rekindled in them and He reawakened in us the primal magic, the renaissance of wonder, the Eden that is the world's heart. The oldest things are always the newest things: the dawn and the sunset that frame the green world twice with fire; the last rainbow that is younger than the first rainbow; the dainty rectitude of the snowflakes — each unique, yet all essential snow; the everlasting mercy that wheat makes bread, that two plus two is four, that grass is green, that up is not down.

GOD CAME AT CHRISTMAS not to shatter reality to bits and remould it nearer to the idiot's whim, but to renew and affirm the basic glory, the great *I Am,* the Eternal Now. He came to affirm that the tonal scales will never change and that therefore the composer can build his palaces of sound not upon quicksand but upon granite. He came to affirm that

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the spectrum will never fluctuate with the manias of the hour, and that therefore El Greco can paint Toledo, or John Doe drive safely through the Chicago traffic. He came to affirm that if we give a stone we do not give bread; that a concentration camp remains itself even if you label it "social hospitalization;" that there is no world, or Hell, or Heaven, where crooked is straight, or a cobra a crosus, or blue a mere relativity of red.

Reality is too clear, too near! As the greatest poet of Christmas, G. K. Chesterton, says:

"Step softly under snow or rain
To find the place where men can pray:
The way is all so very plain
That we may lose the way."

One sometimes fears that the great daylight of death alone can waken us from the little lives by which we die. And yet, at Christmas, even a Pagan world is touched by a nostalgia of grace . . . and almost sees.

If we could only *wholly* see! At Christmas, the second birthday of the world — the point where God thrust the wedge of Eternity into time, splitting it into the years that were, the years that are — we come closest to seeing. For here we almost return to the realities we petulantly threw away: to pain and joy, to love and hate and birth and death, to the stars and the earth and the animals and work, to the Eden that dances unseen in the heart of all things (as sunlight waits imprisoned in the heart of the black coal).

"The angels keep their ancient places; —
Turn but a stone, and start a wing!
'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,
That miss the many-splendoured thing."

We may find, with Thomas Wolfe, "the leaf, the stone, the door, the lost lane-end into Heaven." We may suddenly know that the autumn tree, whose least leaf gathers the sunsets of a summer into a day, is a Burning Bush; that the daily bread is very Eucharist; that as we cleave the sod or turn the stone, *He* is there. We may enter the Kingdom like the child who says the egg has "blossomed" when the daffodil chick steps forth on rebel roots and says "Peep!"

Surely at Christmas we conservationists of Eternity, worshipping the coming of the Great Conservator into His creation, may take heart of grace. And, in His grace, let us gird ourselves anew for the Quest Perilous, the adventure of the Holy Grail, the Crusade that shall never end. Let us sally forth with the great Christian Knight, Don Quixote, to defend the dangerous heresy that two plus two is forever four; to succor the ridiculous paradox that grass is green; to affirm the forbidden dream that an outside must have an inside.

E. Merrill Root is Professor of English at Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana, and author of six books of poetry. His latest work is a book on education to be published in 1955 by Devon-Adair Company.

Additional Copies: 6—1.00; 10—1.50; 50—5.50; 100—10.00; 500—15.00; 1,000—25.00. Quotations for larger quantities on request.

Subscription rates are as follows: 3 months trial subscription, $3.00; 6 months subscription, $5.50; one year subscription, $10.00.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HUMAN EVENTS

FRANK C. HANIGHEN, *Editor*

Contributing Editors: FRANK CHODOROV, WILLIS J. BALLINGER

Vol. XI, No. 50 Wednesday, December 15, 1954 Washington, D. C.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA DEC 28

In and Out of the White House: Here follows authoritative reports from some who attended the White House conferences of December 13 and 14, together with other information about doings in the Executive mansion.

(1) At the conference between the President and Cabinet and the GOP leaders on Monday, GOP Senate Leader Bill Knowland shot a question to the President about the chances of the release of the 11 American airmen now imprisoned in Red China and about whom the UN is now engaging in palavers with Peiping. The President, embarrassed, passed the matter over to Secretary Dulles to answer. The latter uttered some reassuring words, but gave no concrete assurances of success. Knowland, looking straight at the President, said that such words as those of Dulles might "give satisfaction to the press attache writing a press release," but they wouldn't "please the mothers of the boys languishing in a Red jail."

(2) Senator Bridges (Rep., N.H.) also gave the President a difficult time, by bringing up the matter of the "right to work" laws of 17 states. Secretary of Labor Mitchell had just taken a public stand, with presidential backing, condemning these laws and asserting that the union shop should take precedence over such local statutes. Bridges — ignoring Mitchell — reminded the President directly that he (the President) had adopted a "states rights" position in the past two years and helped free coastal states from the shackles of tidelands oil legislation. Why — asked Bridges — should the principle of states rights now be dropped in regard to the 17 states which had exercised their constitutional duty to protect their citizens in their inalienable right to work against the tyranny of labor bosses and the union shop. A strained silence ensued.

(3) Foreign Aid Administrator Stassen, it is agreed, made a fool of himself. As is not unusual with this "eager beaver," he managed to "oversell himself." When he addressed Democratic leaders, particularly the Southern Democrats, he kept calling this or that one, "Mr. Chairman." (They are not yet chairmen, of course, but will be holding such positions when the Democrats organize the Congress after the first of the year.) Apparently disgusted by this too obvious desire to please, Senator Dick Russell of Georgia, slated to be Chairman of the powerful Armed Services Committee, after the meeting took a negative view of Stassen's pet project — massive aid to Asia. (Talk among the Senators following the meeting indicated that if Stassen gets $200 million for Asian aid, instead of the billions he wants, he will be lucky.)

(4) President Eisenhower did not make the mistake of openly wielding the patronage club at the meeting with Republicans. But a number of Senators had an unpleasant bit of information along this line in mind during the meeting. We learn exclusively from a White House source of a definite case of Presidential intervention in the censure voting, despite his protestations of being "above the battle." The case concerns Senator Cotton, just elected to a two-year term from New Hampshire. During Cotton's campaign, he pledged himself to Senator Bridges of his state to vote (if he were elected) against the censure of McCarthy; Bridges was in a position to ask for this, since he was assisting Cotton in his campaign. Cotton was elected. But, two days before the censure vote, Cotton was called to the White

Copyright 1954 by HUMAN EVENTS, INC.
Published weekly at 1835 K Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

House where — our sources reveal — the President strongly urged Cotton to vote for censure. The tally shows that Cotton yielded to the President's wishes. After the voting, the President called in Cotton, thanked him for his vote and promised him patronage benefits as a reward.

Flashes From The Capitol: The greatest political sensation in Washington in the past forty-eight hours is the tart response of GOP Senate Leader Knowland to a reporter who asked if the Senator thought there exists an "irresistible demand" that Eisenhower run again in 1956. Knowland's answer was: "The first essential is to hold the Republican Party together and turn in a record that is acceptable to the American people. Let 1956 take care of itself." And he added: "We ought to devote our attention to getting people into the Republican Party, rather than getting them out of the Party." What made this statement of the Californian so blunt and sensational was the background: demands from various Senators had been filling the newspapers for days, clamoring for a second term for the President. Knowland, conspicuously, did not join the chorus. (The real motives behind this clamor are revealed in our story below, "Operation Patronage.")

● Southern conservative members of Congress are licking their wounds after their defeat in the New Orleans Democratic meeting, where the "liberal" forces won, electing a Stevenson supporter to be National Chairman of the Party. Yesterday, a Republican Senator, knowing what eats at the Southerners' vitals is the issue of segregation, reminded Georgia Senator Dick Russell: "But *we* didn't put over the Supreme Court ruling. Out of the eight justices sitting today, six are Democrats, only two Republicans. Back in the Twenties, when we ran affairs, we had the power to put over segregation, but we didn't do it."

● Fulton Lewis, Jr., a fighter for the Republican cause for the past fifteen years on his broadcasts, recently left for a tour of the Far East, almost at the same time as Joseph Alsop, long a New Deal columnist, now a backer of "liberal" Republicanism. We can report exclusively that the State Department press section, run by "liberals," sent word to all U.S. diplomats in the Orient: "Roll out the carpet for Alsop and give him all the information he wants; pay no attention to Lewis, and tell him nothing."

● Senator McCarthy's hasty exit from Washington — say close personal friends — was due to a dangerous health condition. The painful arm injury, which had sent him to Naval Hospital for a fortnight, came as another affliction on top of a condition of nervous exhaustion, after the strain of the past four years. Even more than his senatorial colleagues — who immediately left for necessary rest periods after the adjournment — the Senator from Wisconsin needed a breather.

Operation Patronage: The big story in the past week in political Washington has been the attempt by the Administration to buy support from the right-wing Republicans. No one who gets about on Capitol Hill and among Republican haunts in clubs and drawing rooms could fail to see that the White House crowd were holding out bait, and that returning Republicans who won re-election were, in many cases, snapping at it.

What do the latter want? In some cases, a Federal judgeship for themselves; in others, a place on the bench for one of their financial backers. The rank and file of voters rarely understand the strong urge which a wealthy lawyer feels for a nice, honorable place on the Federal judiciary; to him, it seems the logical, dignified place for his retirement from practice and it brings lustre to the end of his career. All sorts of considerations such as these prompt legislators to "sell out" to the White House, regardless of the wishes of the voters who elected them.

Two metropolitan newspapers have recognized this situation. The *Chicago Tribune's* bureau chief in Washington, Walter Trohan, on December 11, quoted an un-named "high Republican official" as saying that "the patronage whip is being cracked over Senators to bring them into line to support the President

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and to disown Senator McCarthy who broke with the President." Mr. Trohan goes on: "Senators who supported McCarthy in the Senate condemnation vote were being asked to repudiate in public statements the personal attack McCarthy made on Mr. Eisenhower, this source said."

The *Tribune* is a Republican paper. But we also find the Democratic *Boston Post* perceiving this weapon of patronage. That paper termed "shocking" the fact that Senator Fred Payne of Maine should have "turned against Senator McCarthy." The *Post* remarks that "Mr. Payne would willingly exchange his Senate seat for a Federal appointment of sufficiently long tenure to provide him security, which he has desired above everything else since his heart attack of less than a year ago. It is also no secret that if a Republican had been elected Governor of Maine, Senator Payne would have been appointed controller [Comptroller General] of the United States, a fifteen-year job at a high salary, and that he is on the make for another."

Portent Of The Pig Farmer: Will McCarthy form a Third Party? Best opinion here is "no." McCarthy is too faithful a Republican to feel so inclined. Even if he were not, the last thing the Wisconsin man would or could do is organize such a party. "He can't even organize his front office," a friend of his remarked the other day.

But — it is objected — perhaps the White House and New Dealers will push him, by further persecution, towards such a radical step. Perhaps the pressure of millions of frustrated voters will force his hand. In event that should happen, the Third Party would probably suffer the dismal fate of such enterprises in the past. However, one comment made by Capital observers is suggestive: a "McCarthyite Third Party could hurt the Democrats as much as and perhaps more than the Republicans." For, it is the "portent of the pig farmer" which worries the Democrats.

HUMAN EVENTS was the first to note (November 10) that Case in New Jersey was elected only as a minority candidate. For both Case and Howell (his Democratic opponent for the Senate seat) attacked McCarthy. Howell now realizes that this was a fatal mistake. For Henry Krajewski, a pig farmer and political "unknown" in northern New Jersey, filed as a candidate with only one plank in his platform: "I'm for Joe." He captured 35,000 votes — almost all, concededly, Democratic votes. Case won by a few thousand. Hence, the Democratic candidate was deprived of an otherwise certain victory by the defection of normally Democratic voters who resented his anti-McCarthy stand. It is well known around Washington that this phenomenon worries the Democratic GHQ. They associate it with the defeat of Democratic Senator Burke in Ohio who reportedly lost because he promised to vote for censure. And now news comes from friends of defeated Senator Guy Gillette. They say that the Democratic Senatorial candidate in Iowa lost because thousands of voters in that state confused the "Gillette Committee" (the group in 1951 which "invited" McCarthy to testify) with the Watkins Committee which recommended censure of McCarthy, and expressed their resentment of the move for censure by turning against Gillette at the polls.

How To Treat Labor: A number of years ago the founders of the Lincoln Electric Company — today the largest manufacturer of arc welding equipment in the world — devised a plan for compensating their employees which today is one of the greatest success stories in the field of labor relations. Fearing unionization of the plant, the company's founders divided yearly earnings into three parts. One part went to reward fairly those who had invested capital in the enterprise. A second part was used to lower the prices of the company's products so that ultimately the consumer would benefit. The third part was divided among all the workers on the basis of what each had individually contributed to increasing efficiency in that plant.

Instead of traditional union rules which held back the man who wanted to work and use his head, the Lincoln Company offered a reward at the end of each year for every employee who had improved his work output or who had originated some new plan for cutting red tape or making the plant's opera-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tions more productive. Hours of work were strictly limited to a humane day's work, but within this framework (which included stimulative vacations) every worker was encouraged to put forth the best effort he could *as an individual.* The result was that Lincoln Electric workers earned such high pay that no union could get even a foothold in the company's plants. This year the average annual pay of Lincoln workers is over *eight thousand dollars* and this year in addition to their regular pay, the workers will divide a lush dividend of $4,458,629. Also, the Company purchased for its employees a total of $520,000 in retirement annuities.

Over a period of twenty-one years each worker has received, on the average, fifty thousand dollars in bonuses, *over and above* his or her yearly pay. This year each worker will receive on the average more than *ten thousand dollars* (regular pay plus bonus). Because of this amazing incentive system, based on faith in the power of individualism, the productivity of the Lincoln Company's workers is nearly four times the normal rate for the arc welding industry as a whole.

Political Wisdom: Ike's wise insistence on flexible farm price supports during the late Congressional campaign, in spite of the roars of New Deal agricultural politicians, is impressively vindicated by the latest statistics from the Commodity Credit Corporation. A year ago the value of farm products stored under the mandatory price support program was $4,544,897,000. Today it is close to *seven billion dollars* — a rise of nearly sixty percent in one year. Biggest surpluses are in wheat, cotton and corn. The President's insistence that the government stop playing politics with the farm problem and using the Federal Treasury to encourage over-production of farm products (as happened under Secretary Brannan's regime in the Agricultural Department) is regarded as one of his best decisions.

Interest Rates, Recession And The Democrats: "Hard money" and "easy money" always make good fuel to stoke political fires. When the Eisenhower Administration took office it immediately launched what it called its sound-dollar program. A major feature of the program was to reduce the part of the national debt falling due at very short intervals by issuing longer-term bonds. But long-term bonds always bring a higher interest rate. To borrow long-term in '53, the Treasury had to compete with state and local governments and others in what was becoming a congested money market. Interest rates therefore rose; not only for bonds, but for mortgage and other loans. The Administration soon had to slow up somewhat its public debt program. But the easy-money bloc and others among the Democrats raised a pre-election clamor that the "Humphrey-Burgess hard-money policy" was creating unemployment and business recession. Election day, however, found the nation's business going up, and the fuss subsided.

This month, the credit subcommittee of the Joint Economic Committee called two days of hearings on the subject. A member of that subcommittee is Sen. Douglas of Illinois; and another is Rep. Wright Patman of Texas, who last winter insisted that there be brought before the committee the full Federal Reserve Open Market Committee, a small group of men exercising — according to Patman — tremendous economic powers delegated to the Federal Reserve by the Congress, yet without any direct responsibility to the Congress. One might have expected, therefore, that the appearance of the Federal Reserve chieftains would have resulted in the Democrats proving their past allegations: charges that Treasury policies caused unemployment, or that they were designed to subsidize the banks. Sen. Douglas did tangle with Secretary Humphrey on the former point, although Mr. Humphrey would not concede an inch. But when he had all the Federal Reserve chiefs arrayed before him that afternoon, Patman seemed at a loss for questions to ask. Apparently the "funny-money" man from Texas feared that the Federal Reserve knew all the answers.

Entered as second class matter at the Post Office, Washington, D. C. Quotation up to a paragraph is permitted with credit to HUMAN EVENTS. For reproduction or more extensive quotation address requests to HUMAN EVENTS, 1835 K Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C. Trial Subscription, three months for $3. Six months, $5.50. One year, $10. Two years, $18. First class mail, one year, $11.00; six months, $6.00. Domestic airmail (including APO and FPO) one year, $12.00; foreign (regular mail) one year, $11. Foreign airmail rates on request. Please remit in U.S.A. DOLLARS. Allow two weeks for new subscription or change of address to become effective.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED